

Unbonded: On the striking down of the Electoral Bond Scheme by the Supreme Court

The electoral bonds **verdict** is a **blow** for freedom of expression

Anonymous donations of high value **tend to undermine** electoral democracy and governance as they **facilitate** a **quid pro quo** culture involving donors and **beneficiaries**. In striking down the Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS) under which anyone could buy electoral bonds and donate them to political parties for **encashment**, the Supreme Court of India has recognised this **malaise** and **struck a blow** for democracy and transparency in political funding. The Court found that the entire scheme violates the Constitution, especially the voters' right to information. It further found **manifestly arbitrary**, the **amendment** to the Companies Act that removed the **cap** of 7.5% of a company's profit that can be donated to political parties without any requirement to disclose details of the recipient parties in its profit and loss accounts. It has also **mandated** disclosure of donation details since 2019. The judgment is one more in a **long line of verdicts** **the Court has handed down** to promote voter rights and **preserve** the purity of elections. Its earlier **interventions led to the featuring** of the 'None of the Above' option on the ballot, the removal of the protection given to **legislators** from immediate disqualification on **conviction** for a criminal offence, the mandatory disclosure of the assets and criminal **antecedents** of candidates in their election **affidavits** and **expedited** trials for MPs and MLAs involved in criminal offences.

The Court's **reasoning** is unexceptionable. It found that the primary **justification** for the EBS — **curbing** the use of 'black money' for political or electoral funding by allowing donations through banking channels — **failed the test of proportionality**, as it was not the least restrictive measure to **abridge** the voters' right to know. It has made the logical connection between unidentified corporate donations and **the likelihood of** policy decisions being **tailored** to suit the donors. The judgment is a natural follow-up to a principle it had **laid down** years ago that the voters' freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a) will be incomplete without access to information on a candidate's background. The principle has now been extended to removing the **veil** on corporate donors who may have been funding ruling parties in exchange for favours. While the verdict may help **ease** the **hold** that donors may have on governance through money power, a **question** that arises **is** whether the **validity** of the scheme could have been decided earlier or the issuance of bonds on a regular basis **stayed**. How much of the thousands of crores of rupees given to parties under this scheme **resulted in** policy measures favourable to the donors or helped **fund** the **deployment** of additional campaign resources will never be known. This was a fit case for the grant of an **interim stay**. [Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **Strike down** (phrasal verb) – Overturn, nullify, invalidate, abolish, repeal रद्द करना
2. **Verdict** (noun) – Judgment, decision, ruling, pronouncement, conclusion फैसला
3. **Blow** (noun) – Setback, shock, disappointment, defeat, reversal झटका
4. **Anonymous** (adjective) – Nameless, unidentified, unknown, unnamed, faceless गुमनाम
5. **Tend** (to) (verb) – Be inclined, be likely, be prone, have a tendency, be disposed प्रवृत्त होना
6. **Undermine** (verb) – Weaken, subvert, sabotage, destabilize, undercut कमजोर करना
7. **Facilitate** (verb) – Enable, ease, assist, help, aid सुगम बनाना
8. **Quid pro quo** (noun) – Exchange, trade-off, swap, reciprocation, barter आदान-प्रदान
9. **Beneficiary** (noun) – Recipient, receiver, heir, legatee, grantee लाभार्थी
10. **Encashment** (noun) – Conversion into cash, liquidation, realization, cashing in नकदीकरण
11. **Malaise** (noun) – the problems affecting only a particular group of people or situation that are difficult to explain or identify समस्या
12. **Strike a blow** (phrase) – Deliver a hit, make an impact, cause harm, deal a blow प्रहार करना
13. **Manifestly** (adverb) – Clearly, obviously, evidently, plainly, unmistakably स्पष्ट रूप से
14. **Arbitrary** (adjective) – Capricious, whimsical, random, chance, erratic मनमाना
15. **Amendment** (noun) – Modification, revision, alteration, change, adjustment संशोधन
16. **Cap** (noun) – Limit, ceiling, maximum, upper limit, restriction सीमा
17. **Mandate** (verb) – Order, command, direct, require, instruct आदेश देना
18. **A long line of** (phrase) – A series, a succession, a sequence, a chain, a string एक श्रृंखला
19. **Hand down** (phrasal verb) – announce something, especially a judgement or sentence, formally or publicly. घोषित करना
20. **Preserve** (verb) – Maintain, protect, conserve, safeguard, keep संरक्षित करना

21. **Intervention** (noun) – Involvement, interference, intercession, mediation, intrusion हस्तक्षेप
22. **Lead** (to) (verb) – Result in, cause, bring about, produce, provoke वजह बनना
23. **Featuring** (noun) – Highlighting, showcasing, presenting, displaying, exhibiting प्रदर्शित करना
24. **Legislator** (noun) – Lawmaker, member of parliament, senator, representative, congressperson विधायक
25. **Conviction** (noun) – Sentence, judgment, condemnation, verdict, decision दोषसिद्धि
26. **Antecedent** (noun) – Precedent, precursor, forerunner, predecessor, ancestor पूर्ववर्ती
27. **Affidavit** (noun) – Sworn statement, oath, testimony, declaration, attestation शपथ पत्र
28. **Expedite** (verb) – Accelerate, speed up, hasten, quicken, rush तेजी लाना
29. **Reasoning** (noun) – Logic, rationale, argument, thinking, explanation तर्क
30. **Curb** (verb) – Restrain, control, check, contain, limit नियंत्रण करना
31. **The test of proportionality** (noun) – a commonly employed legal method used by courts around the world, typically constitutional courts, to decide cases where two or more legitimate rights clash
32. **Abridge** (verb) – Shorten, condense, abbreviate, truncate, curtail घटाना
33. **The likelihood of** (phrase) – The probability of, the chance of, the possibility of, the odds of, the prospect of संभावना
34. **Tailor** (verb) – Adapt, customize, modify, shape, adjust अनुकूल बनाना
35. **Lay down** (phrasal verb) – Establish, set out, stipulate, prescribe, dictate निर्धारित करना
36. **Veil** (on) (noun) – Cover, cloak, shroud, mask, screen पर्दा
37. **Ease** (verb) – Alleviate, relieve, reduce, lessen, diminish कम करना
38. **Hold** (noun) – Influence, control, power, authority, sway प्रभाव
39. **Validity** (noun) – Legitimacy, legality, lawfulness, validity, authenticity वैधता
40. **Stay** (verb) – Suspend, postpone, delay, halt, stop रोकना
41. **Result in** (phrasal verb) – Lead to, cause, bring about, produce, provoke परिणाम होना
42. **Fund** (verb) – provide with money for a particular purpose. धन प्रदान करना
43. **Deployment** (noun) – Utilisation, implementation, use, प्रयोग

44. **Interim** (adjective) – Temporary, provisional, transitional, interim, acting
अंतरिम

45. **Stay** (noun) – Suspension, postponement, delay, halt, stoppage रोक

Summary of the Editorial

1. The Supreme Court of India struck down the Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS) for undermining electoral democracy and governance.
2. The EBS allowed anonymous high-value donations to political parties, facilitating a quid pro quo culture between donors and beneficiaries.
3. The Court found the scheme unconstitutional, particularly violating voters' right to information.
4. An amendment to the Companies Act that removed the cap on corporate donations to political parties without disclosure was also found arbitrary.
5. The judgment mandates the disclosure of donation details since 2019.
6. This verdict continues the Court's efforts to promote voter rights and preserve election integrity.
7. Past interventions by the Court include the introduction of the 'None of the Above' option, removal of protection for convicted legislators, and mandatory disclosure of candidates' assets and criminal records.
8. The Court rejected the primary justification for EBS—curbing 'black money' in political funding—as it failed the test of proportionality.
9. The judgment connects unidentified corporate donations to the likelihood of policy decisions being influenced by donors.
10. The verdict extends the principle that voters' freedom of expression includes access to information on political funding.
11. The ruling aims to reduce the influence of money power on governance by revealing corporate donors.
12. The judgment raises questions about the timing of the decision and whether an interim stay should have been granted earlier.
13. The impact of the scheme on policy measures and campaign funding in favor of donors remains unknown.
14. The verdict is a significant step towards transparency and accountability in political funding.
15. The Supreme Court's decision is a landmark ruling that reinforces the importance of voter rights and transparency in the democratic process.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What is the tone of the passage regarding the striking down of the Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS) by the Supreme Court of India?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. Celebratory
 - B. Indifferent
 - C. Critical
 - D. Supportive
2. **What was the primary reason for the Supreme Court of India striking down the Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS)?**
 - A. The scheme was found to be beneficial for the economic growth of the country.
 - B. The scheme was found to violate the Constitution, especially the voters' right to information.
 - C. The scheme was found to increase the transparency of political funding.
 - D. The scheme was found to promote the purity of elections and voter rights.
3. **What amendment to the Companies Act was deemed manifestly arbitrary by the Supreme Court in relation to the Electoral Bond Scheme?**
 - A. The amendment that increased the cap of a company's profit that can be donated to political parties to 10%.
 - B. The amendment that allowed companies to donate up to 7.5% of their profit to political parties without disclosing the details of the recipient parties in their profit and loss accounts.
 - C. The amendment that mandated the disclosure of donation details by companies since 2019.
 - D. The amendment that required companies to disclose their political donations in their annual reports.
4. **From the passage, it can be inferred that all of the following are true about the Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS) EXCEPT that:**
 - A. The primary justification for the EBS was to curb the use of 'black money' for political or electoral funding.
 - B. The Court found the EBS to be the least restrictive measure to abridge the voters' right to know.
 - C. The judgment extended the principle of voters' freedom of expression to include information on corporate donors.
 - D. The validity of the scheme and the issuance of bonds on a regular basis were questioned.
5. **Which one of the following statements best summarizes the author's position on the striking down of the Electoral Bond Scheme by the Supreme Court?**
 - A. The author believes that the verdict is a blow to freedom of expression and questions the timing of the decision.
 - B. The author supports the verdict as it enhances voters' freedom of expression by providing access to information on corporate donors.

- C. The author is critical of the verdict, suggesting it might lead to an increase in the use of 'black money' in political funding.
- D. The author is indifferent to the verdict, focusing instead on the potential impact on the funding of political campaigns.
6. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the given word.
Exonerate
- A. Exempt
- B. Absolve
- C. Engage
- D. Acquit
7. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.**
You will find it difficult _____ but later you will get used to wearing a mask.
- A. on first
- B. at first
- C. firstly
- D. at the first
8. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the given word.
Obscure
- A. Blurred
- B. Apparent
- C. Cloudy
- D. Veiled
9. **The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them contains an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options.**
It has / been raining / since / two hours
- A. since
- B. been raining
- C. It has
- D. two hours
10. Select the most appropriate **synonym** of the given word.
Squawk
- A. Suggest
- B. Explore
- C. Scream
- D. Connote
11. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence. If there is no need to substitute it, select 'No substitution required'.**
In spite of my niece's dog Casper is very mischievous, he is lovable.
- A. Nevertheless my niece
- B. No substitution required
- C. Although my niece's
- D. However my nieces

12. **Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph.**
- A. Firstly, it provides air for respiration, serves the sense of smell and conditions the air by filtering, warming and moistening it.
- B. The nose is the prominent structure between the eyes that serves as the entrance to the respiratory tract.
- C. For inhalation it has two cavities, separated from one another by a wall of cartilage called the septum.
- D. Apart from filtering the air, it also cleans itself of foreign debris extracted from inhalations.
- A. BACD
B. ACDB
C. BADC
D. DBCA
13. **The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.**
- Every Saturday, / the workers gets / their weekly wages.
- A. their weekly wages
B. the workers gets
C. Every Saturday
D. No error
14. **Select the correctly spelt word**
- A. Convert
B. Conect
C. Concent
D. Convect
15. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
- Cool as a cucumber
- A. Nervous and fidgety
B. Irritated and annoyed
C. Calm and composed
D. Happy and excited
16. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.**
- The judge found the prisoner guilty.
- A. The prisoner had been found guilty by the judge.
B. The prisoner was found guilty by the judge.
C. The judge was found guilty by the prisoner.
D. The prisoner has been found guilty by the judge
17. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
- A hair in the butter
- A. Easy to handle
B. A slippery road

- C. Sinking in debt
D. A challenging situation
18. Select the option that can be used as a **one-word substitute** for the given group of words.
Drawings or writing on a wall in a public place
- A. Portrait
B. Caricature
C. Graffiti
D. Collage
19. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.**
The contrast between / Britain and other countries / of Europe / are striking.
- A. The contrast between
B. are striking
C. Britain and other countries
D. of Europe
20. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence. If there is no need to substitute it, select 'No substitution required'.**
Which movie have you watched on television when I called you?
- A. No substitution required
B. were you watching
C. did you watched
D. are you watching

Comprehension:

In the following passage, some words have been deleted. Read the passage carefully and select the most appropriate option to fill in each blank.

The camel and the fox were very good friends and very good thieves. One day, the two friends (1) _____ to cross the river so that they could travel to a (2) _____ farm to steal food. The small fox (3) _____ swim, so the camel said to his friend, 'Climb (4) _____ onto my back and I will swim across the (5) _____.'

21. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 1.**
- A. deciding
B. will decide
C. decided
D. are decide
22. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 2.**
- A. nearby
B. near
C. nearest
D. Nearly
23. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 3**
- A. ought to
B. may not

- C. might
- D. could not

24. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 4.

- A. over
- B. across
- C. up
- D. Above

25. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 5.

- A. sea
- B. ocean
- C. lake
- D. river

Answers

1. D 2. B 3. B 4. B 5. B 6. C 7. B 8. B 9.A 10. C 11.C 12.C
 13. B 14.A 15.C 16.B 17.D 18.C 19.B 20.B 21.C 22.A 23.D 24.C
 25. D

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

1. D) Supportive

The tone of the passage is supportive of the Supreme Court's decision to strike down the Electoral Bond Scheme. The author uses phrases like "a blow for democracy and transparency" and "struck a blow for freedom of expression" to express approval of the verdict. The passage also commends the Court for its reasoning and for promoting voter rights and the purity of elections.

2. B) The scheme was found to violate the Constitution, especially the voters' right to information.

The Supreme Court of India struck down the Electoral Bond Scheme primarily because it was found to violate the Constitution, particularly the voters' right to information. The scheme allowed anonymous donations of high value, which undermined electoral democracy and governance by facilitating a quid pro quo culture between donors and beneficiaries. By striking down the scheme, the Court aimed to promote transparency in political funding.

3. B) The amendment that allowed companies to donate up to 7.5% of their profit to political parties without disclosing the details of the recipient parties in their profit and loss accounts.

The Supreme Court found the amendment to the Companies Act that removed the cap of 7.5% of a company's profit that can be donated to political parties without any requirement to disclose details of the recipient parties in its profit and loss accounts to be manifestly arbitrary. This amendment was part of the Electoral Bond Scheme and was struck down by the Court as it compromised transparency and accountability in political funding.

4. B) The Court found the EBS to be the least restrictive measure to abridge the voters' right to know.

The passage states that the Court found the primary justification for the EBS, which was to curb the use of 'black money' for political funding, failed the test of proportionality as it was not the least restrictive measure to abridge the voters' right to know. Therefore, option B is incorrect, as the Court did not find the EBS to be the least restrictive measure.

5. B) The author supports the verdict as it enhances voters' freedom of expression by providing access to information on corporate donors.

The passage highlights that the Court's reasoning is unexceptionable and that the judgment is a natural follow-up to a principle laid down years ago regarding voters' freedom of expression. The author seems to support the verdict as it removes the veil on corporate donors, thereby enhancing the voters' right to know and their freedom of expression.

6. C) Exonerate (verb) – To absolve someone from blame for a fault or wrongdoing, to clear from accusation or blame. मुक्त करना

Antonym: **Engage** (verb) – To occupy, attract, or involve (someone's interest or attention), or to cause someone to become involved in (a contract or a duty). **संलग्न होना**

- **Exempt** (verb) – To free from an obligation or liability imposed on others. **मुक्त करना**
- **Absolve** (verb) – To set or declare (someone) free from blame, guilt, or responsibility. **दोषमुक्त करना**
- **Acquit** (verb) – To free (someone) from a criminal charge by a verdict of not guilty. **बरी करना**

7. B) **at first**' सही विकल्प है क्योंकि "at first" का अर्थ होता है शुरुआत में। Sentence कहता है कि आपको मास्क पहनने में पहले मुश्किल आएगी, पर बाद में आप इसके आदी हो जाएंगे। इसलिए 'at first' यहाँ पूरी तरह से फिट बैठता है। 'On first' grammatically incorrect है, 'firstly' एक तरीके से लिस्ट को शुरू करने के लिए इस्तेमाल होता है, और 'at the first' भी grammatically incorrect है।

- 'At first' is correct because it refers to the initial stage of a process. The sentence implies that you will initially find it difficult to wear a mask, but will eventually adapt, making 'at first' the correct choice. 'On first' is not grammatically appropriate, 'firstly' is generally used to start a list and not to describe an initial difficulty, and 'at the first' is also not grammatically correct in this context.

8. B) **Obscure** (adjective) – Not clear or hard to understand; not discovered or known about; uncertain. **अस्पष्ट**

ANTONYM: **Apparent** (adjective) – Clearly visible or understood; obvious. **स्पष्ट**

- **Blurred** (adjective) – Not clear, unfocused, indistinct. **धुंधला**
- **Cloudy** (adjective) – Uncertain, unclear, vague, confused, imprecise, indistinct **बादल छाना**
- **Veiled** (adjective) – Covered or concealed as if by a veil; not easily seen or understood. **आच्छादित**

9. A) **since**' के बदले 'for' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'since' का प्रयोग किसी Specific Point of Time के लिए होता है, जबकि 'for' का प्रयोग Duration of Time के लिए होता है; जैसे— It has been raining for two hours.

- 'for' will be used instead of 'since' because 'since' is used for a specific point in time, whereas 'for' is used for a duration of time; Like— It has been raining for two hours.

10. C) **Squawk** (verb) – To make a loud, harsh noise, particularly when speaking or when a bird is making noise. **चीख**

Synonym: **Scream** (verb) – To make a loud, high-pitched sound, especially as a result of pain, surprise, or strong emotion. **चीख**

- **Suggest** (verb) – To put forth for consideration or to propose. सुझाव देना
 - **Explore** (verb) – To investigate or study something thoroughly, or to travel in search of discovery. खोज करना
 - **Connote** (verb) – To imply or suggest (an idea or feeling) in addition to the literal or primary meaning. आभास देना/ संकेत करना
11. C) **Although my niece's** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'In spite of' का प्रयोग गलत है जब कि वाक्य 'he is lovable' के साथ विरोधाभास दिखाना चाहिए। 'In spite of' के स्थान पर 'Although' का प्रयोग करने से वाक्य का अर्थ सही होगा और यह दर्शायेगा कि एक ओर Casper शरारती है और दूसरी ओर वह प्यारा भी है; जैसे— Although my niece's dog Casper is very mischievous, he is lovable.
- Although my niece's will be used because 'In spite of' is incorrectly used when the sentence is meant to show a contrast with 'he is lovable.' Using 'Although' in place of 'In spite of' corrects the sentence meaning, showing that on one hand Casper is mischievous, and on the other, he is lovable; Like— Although my niece's dog Casper is very mischievous, he is lovable.
12. C) **BADC**
The nose is the prominent structure between the eyes that serves as the entrance to the respiratory tract Firstly, it provides air for respiration, serves the sense of smell and conditions the air by filtering, warming and moistening it Apart from filtering the air, it also cleans itself of foreign debris extracted from inhalations. For inhalation it has two cavities, separated from one another by a wall of cartilage called the septum.
13. B) **'gets'** के बदले 'get' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि subject 'the workers' Plural Noun है इसलिए verb भी Plural Form में होनी चाहिए; जैसे— The workers get their weekly wages.
- 'get' will be used instead of 'gets' because the subject 'the workers' is a Plural Noun, hence the verb should also be in the Plural Form; Like— The workers get their weekly wages.
14. A) The correct spelling among the given options is A. Convert परिवर्तन करना,
15. C) **Cool as a cucumber** (idiom) – Calm and composed शांत और संयमित
16. B) The prisoner was found guilty by the judge.
17. D) **A hair in the butter** (idiom) – A challenging situation मुश्किल परिस्थिति
18. C) **Graffiti** (noun) – Drawings or writing on a wall in a public place भित्तिचित्र
- **Portrait** (noun) – a painting, drawing, photograph, or engraving of a person, especially one depicting only the face or head and shoulders. चित्र

- **Caricature** (noun) – a picture, description, or imitation of a person in which certain striking characteristics are exaggerated in order to create a comic or grotesque effect.

व्यंग्यचित्र

- **Collage** (noun) – a piece of art made by sticking various different materials such as photographs and pieces of paper or fabric onto a backing **महाविद्यालय**

19. B) '**are striking**' के बदले 'is striking' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि subject 'The contrast' Singular Noun है अतः Verb भी Singular होगी; जैसे— The beauty of the landscape is breathtaking.

- 'is striking' will be used instead of 'are striking' because the subject 'The contrast' is a Singular Noun, so the Verb must also be Singular; Like— The beauty of the landscape is breathtaking.

20. B) '**were you watching**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'when I called you' Past Continuous Tense की verb की आवश्यकता दिखाता है क्योंकि यह एक ऐसी verb का वर्णन करता है जो past में एक विशेष समय पर चल रही थी; जैसे— I was reading a book when you called.

- **were you watching** will be used because 'when I called you' indicates the need for a Past Continuous Tense verb as it describes an action that was ongoing at a specific time in the past; Like— I was reading a book when you called.

21. C) '**Decided**' का use होगा क्योंकि "decided" past tense में कार्य के निश्चित होने का बोध कराता है। Passage में बताया गया है कि एक दिन दोनों दोस्तों ने नदी पार करने का निश्चय किया, इसलिए 'decided' यहाँ सही विकल्प है। 'Deciding' present continuous tense में होता है, 'will decide' future tense में है, और 'are decide' grammatically incorrect है।

- **Decided** should be used because it conveys a past action that was completed. The passage is talking about an event that took place in the past where the two friends made a decision, thus 'decided' is the correct choice here. 'Deciding' would suggest an ongoing action, 'will decide' would refer to a future decision, and 'are decide' is not grammatically correct.

22. A) '**Nearby**' का use होगा क्योंकि "nearby" एक ऐसा विशेषण है जो किसी ऐसे स्थान की बात करता है जो आस-पास हो। इस context में, ऊंट और लोमड़ी एक ऐसे फार्म में जाना चाहते हैं जो आसपास हो ताकि वे वहाँ से भोजन चुरा सकें, इसलिए 'nearby' यहाँ सही शब्द है। 'Near' का इस्तेमाल भी आस-पास के लिए किया जाता है लेकिन वह अधिक सामान्य है और 'nearest' का अर्थ होता है 'सबसे नजदीकी' जो कि यह नहीं बताता कि वह स्थान आस-पास है। 'Nearly' का मतलब 'लगभग' होता है और यहाँ उपयुक्त नहीं है।

- '**Nearby**' should be used as it describes a place that is close at hand. In this context, the camel and the fox plan to go to a farm that is in the vicinity to steal food, making 'nearby' the correct word. 'Near' is also used for closeness but is more generic, and 'nearest'

implies the 'most close,' which does not necessarily mean it is within a close range.

'Nearly' means 'almost' and is not applicable here.

23. D) **could not** सही विकल्प है क्योंकि यह दर्शाता है कि छोटी लोमड़ी तैर नहीं सकती थी।

Context के अनुसार, ऊँट ने अपने दोस्त से कहा कि वह उसकी पीठ पर चढ़ जाए क्योंकि लोमड़ी तैर नहीं सकती थी, इसलिए 'could not' यहाँ फिट बैठता है। 'Ought to' का अर्थ है कि करना चाहिए, जो इस संदर्भ में नहीं बैठता। 'May not' का प्रयोग अनुमति या संभावना को नकारने के लिए होता है, और 'might' अनिश्चितता या संभावना को दर्शाता है, लेकिन यहाँ निश्चितता की जरूरत है कि लोमड़ी तैर नहीं सकती थी।

- **Could not** is the correct choice because it indicates an inability to swim. The context suggests that the fox needed the camel's help to cross the river because it couldn't swim on its own, which is why 'could not' is the right fit here. 'Ought to' implies a duty or advice, which is not applicable here. 'May not' is used to indicate a possibility that is not allowed or is unlikely, and 'might' suggests uncertainty, but the sentence requires a statement of fact that the fox could not swim.

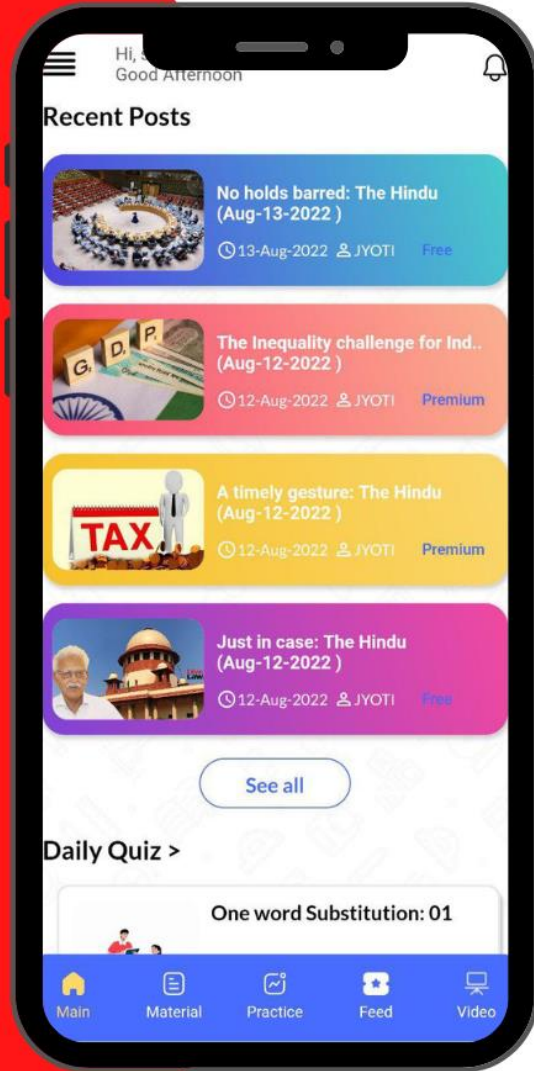
24. C) **up** सही विकल्प है क्योंकि "climb up" का अर्थ होता है किसी ऊँचाई पर चढ़ना या किसी चीज पर आरोहण करना।

Sentence में यह बताया गया है कि ऊँट ने लोमड़ी से कहा कि वह उसकी पीठ पर चढ़ जाए ताकि वह नदी पार कर सके, इसलिए 'climb up' यहाँ पूरी तरह से सही बैठता है। 'Over' का उपयोग किसी चीज के पार जाने के लिए होता है, 'across' का मतलब होता है किसी चीज के आर-पार जाना, और 'above' का मतलब होता है किसी चीज के ऊपर होना, जो इस संदर्भ में उचित नहीं हैं।

- **'Up'** is correct because "climb up" means to ascend or to get on top of something. The sentence indicates that the camel offers the fox to climb onto its back for crossing the river, hence 'climb up' is fitting here. 'Over' suggests moving from one side to the other side of something, 'across' means from one side to another side through, and 'above' indicates a position higher than something else, none of which are appropriate in this context.

25. D) **River** का use होगा क्योंकि पूरे passage में एक consistency है जो 'river' की तरफ इशारा करती है। पहले sentence में बताया गया है कि वे पार करना चाहते हैं 'river' को, इसलिए blank number 5 में 'river' सही शब्द होगा। 'Sea' और 'ocean' तो बहुत बड़े water bodies होते हैं, और 'lake' पहले mention नहीं किया गया है।

- **'River'** should be used because the passage consistently refers to the intent of crossing a river, as mentioned in the first sentence. The use of 'sea' or 'ocean' would denote much larger bodies of water and would not be consistent with the previous mention, and 'lake' has not been mentioned previously.



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